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Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 02906 101318 Z

44
ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 OMB-01 RSR-01

AID-20 /114 W
---------- 027003
O P 101201 Z APR 73
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8710
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY
AMCONUL KARACHI PRIORITY
AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY

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E. O. 11652: N/ A
TAGS: PGOV, PK
SUBJECT: PAK ASSEMBLY APPROVES CONSTITUTION BY OVERWHELMING VOTE

1. SUMMARY: IN DRAMATIC FINAL- HOUR SESSION, PAK NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SITTING AS CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY GAVE OVERWHELMING VOTE TO NEW PERMANENT CONSTITUTION AS MOST OF THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION GAVE UP BOYCOTT AND JOINED IN THE APPROVING VOTE. CLIFF- HANGING SUCCESS FOLLOWED FINAL NEGOTIATIONS IN EXTREMIS BETWEEN BHUTTO AND OPPOSITION LEADERS. END SUMMARY.

2. I ATTENDED FINAL DAY OF DEBATE ON PROPOSED CONSTITU- TION APRIL 10. TOGETHER WITH OTHER DIPLOMATIC CHIEFS OF MISSION. WE HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT PRES BHUTTO WOULD APPEAR AT 11:3 A. M.
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TO WIND UP DEBATE PRIOR TO FINAL VOTE. AT
THE APPOINTED HOUR, VIRTUALLY ALL SEATS OF THE POLITICAL
OPPOSITION WERE VACANT. BEGUM BHUTTO HAD ARRIVED AND
TAKEN HER SEAT IN DISTINGHISHED VISITOR' S GALLERY, BUT
PRESIDENT DID NOT MAKE HIS APPEARANCE. NUMBER OF CENTRAL
MINISTERS ROSE TO TALK ABOUT THE CONSTITUTION, BUT IT SEEMED
CLEAR THAT THEY WERE FILLING IN TIME. SUBSEQUENTLY,
LAW MINISTER PIRZADA, WHO HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR CONSTI-
TUTION BILL, CAME IN AND OFFERED SEVERAL NEW AMENDMENTS.
HE THEN LEFT THE HOUSE AND NUMBER OF OTHER PERSONS ROSE
TO GIVE THEIR FINAL THOUGHTS ABOUT CONSTITUTION.

3. AT ABOUT 1300 PIRZADA REENTERED HOUSE AND ANNOUNCED
THAT THE OPPOSITION BENCHES WOULD SOON BE FILLED. HUBUB
ENSUED. PIRZADA THEN LEFT. AFTER ANOTHER THREE- QUARTERS HOUR
OR SO, MOST OF THE MISSING OPPOSITION MEMBERS FILED IN
AND TOOK THEIR SEATS. PIRZADA, WHO HAD MEANWHILE RETURNED, ASKED
AND OBTAINED PERMISSION TO PROPOSE SEVEN
FINAL LAST- MINUTE AMENDMENTS WHICH HE STATED HAD BEEN AGREED
TO WITH THE OPPOSITION. ALL OF THESE WERE DELY APPROVED
BY 123-125 APPROVING VOTES -- APPARENTLY ALL OF THE MEMBERS
PRESENT WITH EXCEPTION OF TWO FORMER MEMBERS OF PPP AND ONE
CURRENT PPP MAVERICK.

4. VOTES WERE TAKEN IN RAPID SUCCESSION WITHOUT DEBATE.
SUBJECT TO FURTHER REVIEW WHEN WE HAVE MORE TIME TO
STUDY THEM, I GOT IMPRESSION THAT THE AMENDMENTS PERTAINED
MAINLY TO TWO POINTS: (A) PROVISION FOR SIMPLE MAJORITY
VOTE IN ASSEMBLY ON BUDGET MATTERS (DRAFT CONSITITUTION
PREVIOUSLY HAD STRONGER SAFEGURARDS FOR INCUMBENT GOVERNMENT);
AND (B) AN EASING OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR REFERENCE TO THE
PROPOSED ISLAMIC COUNCIL OF QUESTION AS TO WHETHER A PROPOSED
LAW IS REPUGNENT TO INJUNCTIONS OF ISLAM.

5. AT ABOUT 1400, PRES BHUTTO ENTERED HOUSE AND TOOK
HIS PLACE IN THE CHAIR AS PRESIDENT OF THE ASSEMBLY.
PIRZADA WOUND UP DEBATE PRIOR TO THIRD AND FINAL READING
OF BILL, APPEALING FOR HOUSE TO APPROVE IT UNANI-
MOUSLY. BHUTTO THEN SPOKE FOR ABOUT ONE- HALF HOUR IN CONCILIA-
TORY TONE, REVIEWING SOME OF THE UNFORTUNATE CONSTITUTION-
MAKING HISTORY OF PAKISTAN AND AFFIRMING THE IMPORTANCE OF
THE NEW BASIC LAW ABOUT TO BE VOTED ON. NOTING THAT HE HAD
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ALWAYS BEEN OPEN TO DISCUSSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROV-

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ING DRAFT CONSTITUTION, BHUTTO REVEALED THAT HE HAD
ARRIVED AT ASSEMBLY AT 1130, INTENDING TO ENTER THE HOUSE
ONLY TO BE INFORMED THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
OPPOSITION WISHED TO HAVE FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH
HIM. (THE LAST- MINUTE AMENDMENTS WERE APPARENTLY
HAMMERED OUT IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER.)
HE APPEALED TO MEMBERS OF OPPOSITION TO VOTE FOR CON-
STITUTION AND THUS TO JOIN WITH ALL OTHERS IN PROVID-
ING BASIS FOR BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF
PAKISTAN. HE AFFIRMED THAT " EITHER TODAY OR TOMORROW, WE' LL
HAVE TO RECOGNIZE OBJECTIVES REALITIES (OF THE SUBCONTINENT)."

6. THE COUNT ON THE FINAL VOTE WAS 12 5 IN FAVOR. THIS
INCLUDED VIRTUALLY ALL LEADERS OF OPPOSITION PARTIES: WALI
KHAN OF NAP (AND ALSO BIZENJO OF BALUCHISTAN), GHAFOOR OF
JAMAAT- I- ISLAMI, SHAUKAT HYAT OF COUNCIL MUSLIM LEAGUE
AND MUFTI MAHMOOD OF JAMIATUL- ULEMA- I- ISLAM. (I GOT IM-
PRESSION THAT MAULANA NOORANI, LEADER OF JAMIATUL- ULEMA-
I- PAKISTAN (JUP), REMAINED IN HIS SEAT, BUT I MAY HAVE BEEN
WRONG.) THE SAME THREE PERSONS WHO HAD VOTED AGAINST
SOME OF THE AMENDMENTS EARLIER IN THE SESSION ALSO VOTED
AGAINST THE CONSTITUTION ON ITS FINAL READING.

7. WITH REGARD TO CRUCIAL PARTICIPATION OF BALUCHISTAN
PROVINCE , BOTH MEMBERS FROM BALUCHISTAN WHO WERE IN THE
HOUSE -- BIZENJO AND ONE OTHER --
STOOD IN FAVOR OF THE CONSTITUTION. (BIZENJO TOLD ME IMME-
DIATELY FOLLOWING THE SESSION THAT NONE OF THE OTHER THREE
MEMBERS FROM BALUCHISTAN WERE IN ISLAMABAD; BUT THE IMPRESSION
HE LEFT WAS THAT THEY WOULD HAVE VOTED QTE FOR UNQTE IF
PRESENT.) THERE WAS GENERAL AND NATURAL JUBILATION WHEN
PRES BHUTTO ANNOUNCED THE FINAL COUNT IN FAVOR OF THE
CONSTITUTION AND DECLARED THE ASSEMBLY ADJOURNED
SINE DIE. DECLASSIFIED APRIL 10. 1975.
SOBER

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TAGS: PGOV, PK
To: AMCONUL KARACHI
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LAHORE
LONDON
NEA
NEW DELHI

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